

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Kiyobumi Kurita et al.
Serial No. : 10/579,599
Filing Date : May 17, 2006
Examiner : Scott R. Kastler
Group Art Unit : 1793
For : HOT AIR CIRCULATION FURNACE

**Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450**

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

This Information Disclosure Statement is submitted:

- [] Under 37 C.F.R. 1.129(a), or
(First/Second Submission after Final Rejection)
- [] Under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(b), or
(Within any one of the following time periods: three (3) months of filing national application, other than a CPA, or date of entry of the national stage in an international application; or before the mailing date of a first official action on the merits in a non-provisional application, including a CPA; or a Request for Continued Examination (RCE))
- [XX] Under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(c), together with either:
- [XX] Statement under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(e), as checked below, or
- [] Fee of \$180.00 under 37 C.F.R. 1.17(p), or
(After the 37 C.F.R. 1.97(b) time period, but before Final Office Action or Notice of Allowance, whichever issues first)
- [] Under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(d), together with:
- [] Statement under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(e), as checked below, and
- [] Fee of \$180.00 under 37 C.F.R. 1.17(p), or
(Filed after Final Office Action or Notice of Allowance, whichever issues first, but on or before payment of Issue Fee)

[] Under 37 C.F.R. 1.97 (i):

Applicant respectfully requests that the I.D.S. and cited reference(s) be placed in the application file wrapper (Filed after payment of Issue Fee).

Statement Under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(e):

[XX] Each item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three (3) months prior to the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement; or

[] No item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the undersigned, after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the Information Disclosure Statement was known to any individual designated in 37 C.F.R. 1.56(c) more than three (3) months prior to the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement.

Statement Under 37 C.F.R. 1.704 (d) - (Patent Term Adjustment):

(Applies to original applications, other than designs, filed on or after May 29, 2000)

[] Each item of information contained in the Information Disclosure Statement was cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart application and this communication was not received by any individual designated in 37 C.F.R. 1.56(c) more than thirty (30) days prior to the filing of the Information Disclosure Statement.

Enclosed Herewith is Form PTO-1449, and:

[XX] Copies of the cited references are enclosed.

[] Copies of the cited references are enclosed, except those entered in prior application, U.S. Serial No. _____, to which priority under 35 U.S.C. 120 is claimed (The earlier application contains copies of the cited references).

[] The listed references were cited in the enclosed International Search Report in a counterpart foreign application.

[XX] The "concise explanation" requirement (non-English reference) for Reference(s) _____ under 37 C.F.R. 1.98(a)(3) is satisfied by:

[XX] the explanation provided on the attached sheet;

[] the explanation provided in the specification;

[] submission of the enclosed International Search Report; or

[XX] the enclosed English language Abstract.

[] Applicant requests that the following pending applications be considered:

U.S. Patent/Application No. _____, filed/issued _____
U.S. Patent/Application No. _____, filed/issued _____
U.S. Patent/Application No. _____, filed/issued _____

Examiner

Date

- [] A copy of each above-cited application, including the current claims, is enclosed.
- [] A copy of each above-cited application, including the current claims, is enclosed, except those entered in prior application Serial No. _____, to which priority under 35 U.S.C. 120 is claimed.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to return a copy of the above list of pending applications indicating which references were considered with the next Official Action.

Further, it is respectfully requested that the information disclosed herein be made of record in this application.

Method of Payment:

- [] A check for the fee noted above is enclosed.
- [] Please charge our deposit account No. 14-1431.
- [XX] The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency in payment of fees and credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 14-1431.

Respectfully submitted,
/PETER C MICHALOS/
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Dated: November 6, 2008

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CUSTOMER NO. 21706

COMMENTS

The following references have been cited in a relevant Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-49047 and were brought to the attention of the undersigned on October 30, 2008. The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider the following comments concerning these material references and the attached IDS and form PTO/SB/08A separately listing these references.

Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 58-133316

This document discloses a rotary type heat treating furnace that includes: a furnace body 1 having a heating element 12 and a heating furnace bottom 3; compartments 6 into or out of which works can be conveyed by the opening or closing of a bottom cover; and a recirculation fan 23 disposed near a roof. An atmosphere gas heated by a heater 22 disposed on a furnace wall is recirculated around the compartments (containers for accommodating works) 6. Each of the compartments is uniformly heated by the convection heating.

Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 09-042834

This document discloses a drying furnace. The drying furnace includes a circular stocker frame 8 rotatably that holds many component baskets 12 radially and vertically in plural layers. Using hot air supply/exhaust passages provided in the four corners of a square hot air circulation furnace body surrounding the stocker frame 8, the drying furnace recirculates a hot air diagonally across the furnace body, thereby drying the components or suchlike accommodated in each layer of the component baskets 12 vertically held in the stocker frame.

Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 2000-349103

This document discloses a thermostatic chamber (shown in FIG. 5) for curing semiconductors. This thermostatic chamber includes a carry-in opening 22a and a carry-

out opening 22b disposed in different walls of the square thermostatic chamber 22 separately. The carry-in opening 22a and the carry-out opening 22b have a carry-in unit 24 and a carry-out unit 26 respectively for magazine cases 11 accommodating semiconductors.

Japanese Utility Model Application Publication No. 39-2660

This document discloses a preheating furnace. In the preheat furnace, a space above a circular rack 3 supported by a rotary shaft 2 is divided into a number of small sections "c" by a number of vertical blades 5 radially attached to the rotary shaft 2. The small section "c" moves to a furnace opening "b" while heating the pieces of metal in order to make resin coating of the metal by radiant heat generated by an electric heater 4 disposed below the rack 3. A door 7 is opened for every small section "c" and the metal after heat treating is taken out.

Japanese Utility Model Application Laid-Open No. 58-121363

This document discloses a rotary hearth type heat treating furnace. Heating products 7 are accommodated in pots 8 which are arranged radially at regular intervals on an annular rotating hearth 3 and is rotated in furnace. In the meantime, the heating products 7 pass through three types of chambers, namely, preheating chambers 10, 11, a heating chamber 12, and cooling chambers 13, 14 in that order. In this heat treating furnace, the cooling chambers 13, 14 and the preheating chambers 10, 11 are connected by ducts 16, 17, and an atmosphere gas is circulated between the cooling chambers 13, 14 and the preheating chambers 10, 11 by a circulating fan 18. Pots 8 heated by radiation heat generated by an electric heater 20 in the heating chamber are cooled by the circulating fluid in the cooling chambers 13, 14. On the other hand, heat deprived from the pots 8 is introduced to the preheating chambers 10, 11 and utilized to preheat the pots 8.